

PACIFIC WEEKLY

A WESTERN JOURNAL OF OPINION

JANUARY 11, 1935

**"SEND ME TO RUSSIA,"
SAYS STEFFENS TO
W. R. HEARST**

NORA CONKLIN'S STORY

\$2 A YEAR

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PACIFIC WEEKLY

VOLUME II

FRIDAY, JANUARY 11, 1935

NUMBER 2

NOTES AND COMMENT

IT APPEARS that there is to be no backing down this time by the working newspapermen of America in their battle for recognition of their Guild and what organization means in better working conditions and decent pay for their labors. Guild chapters throughout the country are reporting a growing interest and a stiffening of the sinews of war against the publishers. Publication by PACIFIC WEEKLY two weeks ago of Jean Winthrop's article on the San Francisco Examiner's inexcusable and brutal treatment of Redfern Mason, music critic, is said to have given the California Guild members added courage. Incidentally, this magazine was unable to supply the demand for copies containing the article and in answer to many requests "Freedom of the Free Press" will be re-published by PACIFIC WEEKLY in next week's issue, January 18, together with the letter by W. K. Bassett, editor, to the members of the American Newspaper Guild.

ENGLAND recognizes officially at last that charity is a "stigma", not to be put upon Englishmen. The government will make up the difference to a living wage for all workers under a certain minimum, and will do it as a matter of right and decency. Must be nearer a revolution over there than the news indicates.

NEW YORK State's statesmen are to consider at this session of their legislature an anti-pudist bill which makes a misdemeanor personal exposure "in the presence of two or more members of the opposite sex also exposed". If the new law is proposed on moral grounds we fear that it will not accomplish its end. It is in personal exposure in the presence of one other member of the opposite sex where the troubles of the world lie.

HOW CRUEL and relentless is the majesty of the law! In Flemington, N. J., Colonel and Mrs. Charles A. Lindbergh are being forced to live over again the horror of the great tragedy in their lives in order that twelve jurymen may have legal possession of facts that have been common knowledge to them for years.

"I show you a picture and ask you if that is a picture of your child?" says the attorney, and Mrs. Lindbergh replies "It is."

"Will you tell us, please, what was the color of his hair?"

"It was light golden."

"Is this the flannel shirt that your child had on that night in that crib when he was

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put to bed on March 1, 1932?"

"It is."

"You haven't seen that child since the first of March, 1932, have you?"

"No."

And then they ask Colonel Lindbergh:

"You didn't get your money or your baby back?"

"I did not," answers Colonel Lindbergh.

But, it appears, there are many persons resident in New Jersey who have formed no opinion on the case and are anxious to serve on the jury. Alexander Woolcott in his syndicated story of the trial calls twelve peo-

ple conglomerate liars in a handsome manner, as follows:

In advance it had seemed reasonable to fear it might be necessary to draft the entire citizenry of Hunterdon county in the quest for 12 adults who had neither discussed the case nor formed an opinion about it. One would expect to find such satisfactory aloofness only among congenital idiots or among those who had spent the last few months in the kind of withdrawal from this world usually achieved only by lamas in Thibet. But as it worked out, nearly every member of the panel seemed eager to serve on the jury and unblushingly willing to put his or her hand on the court Bible and blandly deny ever having given the case a thought. Thus in our time in New Jersey is justiced served quickly, if at all.

Woolcott's slant on the case, also in his syndicated article provided us by the North American Newspaper Alliance, is interesting and inspires thought. It is:

When at long last the full story of this monstrous crime becomes a matter of record, as may well happen before this year has run its course, I think it will be shown that that Hopewell nursery was rifled by one who hated the world's hero with all the insane jealousy of which an egomaniac is capable. This was no such random blow as was struck in the Leopold-Loeb case, and in that lies the only essential difference between the two crimes. Otherwise they march side by side.

PACIFIC WEEKLY

A Western Journal of Opinion

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LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--

THEY'RE getting all out of doors too wet. No moderation. Just one April shower after another, all this winter.

OUR PROMISING governor is promising again, and good Republicans are making wry faces and muttering: "promises!" What do they expect? I mean what more do they expect? Poor man is doing the best he can and that's all we can ask, isn't it? We wouldn't let him do the job, now, would we? We'd kill anybody that would really do what has to be done in this state. Think of abolishing poverty, stopping all graft, and setting up democracy. I say, let the governor of California go on representing Californians, the best of us: doing his best.

I WONDER why words came and arranged themselves for Shakespeare; just like little dogs they lay down at his feet and looked up into his eyes; or like lovers; and they let him say anything he wanted to.

THAT MAN, Scott Nearing, who is coming to Carmel to give the first lecture of our new forum, is an interesting guy. He is a scholar with a conscience; devoted all his life to the collection and understanding of facts that we dance to, fight wars over and give up fortunes for. I have known him all my life, and I don't believe he ever lays off hot pursuit any longer than is necessary to report what he's seen. It will be a privilege to hear him talk; it will be a privilege to ask him questions.

THEY ARE convicting Bruno Richard Hauptmann of kidnapping the poor little rich child, Charles Lindbergh, Jr., and will soon stop punishing him. But the punishment of the father and mother will still go right on.

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST begins to sound sincere, and that's too bad. He is intelligent, you know. Not many careers have been so planned, so intelligent, so firmly managed as his. A work of art, that man's life has been, and conscious. It began, I think, in college. At Harvard, when this rich young man was supposed to be sowing his wild oats, I found upon inquiry, that he was also studying journalism hard, privately and regularly. Every Sunday he would spread the big newspapers out over the floor of his room and so compare them, in de-

tail—the heads, the make-up, the form of the leading stories and the effects. When he came home to San Francisco, he knew what a good news-beat was, what a good reporter had to be, and he took over his father's paper, and bought a staff and an editor. Gradually he bought other papers. All art and business with him. He was radical in all ways, then, but always his art, journalism.

He had his sincerities; he got them from his father and from his own readings of history. Willie Hearst had a philosophy—not for publication. By the same token the man had policies and ideals—not for publication; and, I think, his professional staffs hardly knew or believed this. Brisbane seemed to me to be for years the only believer Hearst had. Brisbane and I. But the editor of the Hearst papers played along patient of misunderstanding in his office as outside. A wilful, able man of his world, he seemed to care only that William Randolph Hearst understood the ideology of the Hearst papers.

But lately this wise man has been writing articles under his own name and they sound as if he believed them, every word. He seems to think, really, that communism is a menace

here and that it is an evil dictatorship in Soviet Russia. It's all right to say this when you're fighting as he always was and always is, but how can he believe it? He quotes the chief of the White Russian guards, who is hardly credible. Why doesn't he send a reporter, like me, for instance, over into Asia and see what is really happening there. He knows perfectly well that I believe in Russia and that I could still report the facts. And apparently the facts, if facts, would be news to the editor of Hearst's chain of newspapers. Might be news even to me. But the interesting thing to me is that it would probably be news to the United States and the whole western world. I certainly would get some news there. I would find out, for instance, what substitutes they have for our profit motive; whether there is in human nature a substitute for individual gain that really works. I would not be sincere, you know; not as Mr. Hearst is. I would see the whole thing, as I do Mr. Hearst's fight against free thought, free speech, free learning in the University. I certainly would not be blind to anything but my rather humorous convictions.

I wish Mr. Hearst would be again an artist journalist.

SHE'S IN WHO'S WHO

BY DOROTHEA CASTELHUN

OH, my dear, isn't it ages since we've seen each other? So many things happen in five years, don't they? Well, you know, we're feeling quite grand now we've got a celebrity right in the family.

Why, my sister, of course!

Yes, my dear, actually she's in *Who's Who*. Didn't you see her name?

You didn't? Well, that's strange. It's very conspicuous, right up in the left-hand corner of page eleven hundred and fifty-nine. Or is it sixty? Anyhow, it's right along in there. And it tells all about her, where she was born and everything.

How did she get in? Why, they wrote and asked her specially because she's an author, you know.

Haven't you seen her books? But, my dear, they're in a great many book stores and our library even has two copies of each! Probably your library has, too. They're the Sally Ann Series—for girls—you know. Sally Ann's Venture, Sally Ann's Friends and Sally Ann's New Home. Isn't it marvelous to have written three books! I can't believe it's my own sister. So strange you haven't seen them.

It's really a great honor to be put in

Who's Who, you know. Only very prominent people are asked. And really it's like joining an exclusive club, it brings you such interesting new contacts. Almost every mail Penelope gets something thrilling. You'd be surprised how lovely people have been. Only the other day Tracy C. Drake wrote her the nicest letter. You know, he's the president of the Drake Hotel Company—oh, yes, they own both the Blakestone and the Drake. Well, my dear, he said that any time she wanted to charge her bill at either hotel he'd be glad to have her do it. You can see what a compliment that is. And of course, although Penelope's never been to Chicago, she might have to go some time.

Seems as though her fame is just spreading and spreading. She's not only in *Who's Who in America*, she's in *Who's Who in Literature* and *Who's Who in the East*, too, and some others I can't remember.

Yes, isn't it? Of course, we're so proud of her wonderful success!

Well, when the *International Register* wrote to ask permission to put her on their list, Penelope answered—she's so conscientious!—that she was sorry but that she hadn't ever been abroad so she didn't feel she was eligible for the honor. But they wrote

right back and said that didn't matter at all, that she probably *would* go some time and the idea was to have the names of worthwhile people in their book. Such a good idea, I think. If you get acquainted with someone while you're traveling, you can look them right up in the *International Traveler's Register* to see if they're desirable. If they're not in it, of course, you wouldn't want to get too friendly. In fact, I think it would be just as well simply to stick to the *Register* and not bother with anyone else. Then you'd be safe . . .

Just seems as if there's no end to the honors Penelope's had showered on her since

her name has been in *Who's Who*. She was even invited to become a member of the Archaeological Institute of America! And just fancy—the *International Blue Book* that's printed in English, German, Spanish and Italian, my dear, wanted her name! We were quite thrilled at the thought of our little Penelope in with all those foreigners!

Well, no, as a matter of fact, she isn't actually in it, because you have to pay a ten-dollar registration fee and we talked it over and decided that perhaps it was enough if she was in those American collections. And anyhow, she is in the travel book, which is sort of foreign, you see . . .

Yes, and the *Travel Association of Great*

Britain and Ireland sent her, right from London, a little book telling just what's going to happen over there in 1935. They said in case she should go to England this year it would help her plan her trip. Ever so many people have been lovely and thoughtful like that . . .

It makes the postman's coming so interesting every day. I tell Penelope I guess I'll have to do something to get my name in *Who's Who* just so I'll get more mail. Of course, I'm only joking. Goodness, I know perfectly well I haven't a spark of genius. But Penelope doesn't mind our teasing her a little about her fame. It hasn't spoiled her a bit being in *Who's Who*!

FOUR NATIONS IN RECEIVERSHIP

BY D. T. MAC DOUGAL

WHEN the affairs of an organization get into such condition that its main purposes can no longer be carried out it is customary to place the whole project in the hands of a trustee, a reorganization committee or a receiver.

Receivership carries with it powers not conceded to the normal management. Many important values may be cancelled, or shifted, or new and unusual liabilities created. The end in view is to safeguard the assets, and if possible get the mechanism in working order so that it may again function in a normal or satisfactory manner. When this is accomplished the receivership customarily ends, and the project with perhaps a much altered organization with a new scheme of operation passes back to the control of the interested constituents.

It is the sense of this last-named purpose that it may be said that temporary powers are now being exercised in four great countries—Russia, Italy, Germany and United States—which are in a sense receiverships affecting directly a total population of nearly five hundred million people, and indirectly the whole civilized world. By whatever terms the receiverships in these countries may be separately characterized, there is generally one common feature, which is that such rule by emergency measures is temporary, or for short periods and that ultimately the extraordinary powers of the receiver are abrogated and a plan of operation put into effect which promises to be adequate for long periods of time.

In Russia control has been gained by a small self-continuing autocratic body which projects a communized state, paradoxically enough, under its irresponsible dominance.

In other words, the receivership has achieved the ultimate stabilized pattern, which is supposed to be subject to only minor modifications. However, it is reasonably certain that the receiverships in the other countries will follow the general formula.

It is not easy for us who are involved in this turmoil to discern the causes which have brought about the conditions described. However, the historian looking backward at the end of the Twentieth Century over the course of the Graeco-Roman civilization of which we are a part, will be able clearly to discern momentous changes in the routine of life in the early part of the century. Anyone born before 1900 lived that part of his life in an atmosphere charged with the idea that the conditions governing the lives of their fathers would go on continuously and without ending. The fact such conditions had prevailed for centuries seemed to render them "eternal verities" about which the collegian listened to the results of much brittle and short-sighted thinking in the otherwise gay "nineties".

This historian in his review of the literature would discover that the leading philosopher of these critical times (Whitehead) had been well aware, and had concisely set forth the fact in his "Adventures of Ideas" that our sociological theories, political economy, practices of business, and even our doctrines of education had been handed along by our great thinkers in an unbroken sequence from the time of Plato, through twenty-four centuries. That these centuries were dramatic with the rise and fall of empires, conquests, migrations and catastrophes in no wise changes this verdict.

The reviewer from his vantage point of elapsed years would also note that early in

the centuries latent economic forces came into play, chiefly by the applications of science; that new human relations came to recognition and that new ways of thinking were achieved.

Furthermore, it would be evident that the tempo of life had accelerated. Political and social changes of the kind for which generations were formerly necessary now occurred within a decade and this may be safely put forth by even the most timid prophet as one of the features of civilized existence which will never be reversed. In all these changes the systematized ways of science have played a prominent part.

The coincidental occurrence of so many new problems has resulted in situations for which the old machinery of civilized countries has been found notably inadequate. Hence the various forms of *ad interim* government and the disturbing confusion of emergency measures. In many of these emergency acts by legislation, by dictatorial proclamation and by military direction, there is to be seen for the first time in the history of our civilization or of any civilization, for that matter, an attempt to find solutions to important problems by experimentation.

Now because science proceeds chiefly upon the basis of statistics derived from systematized observations and by experimentation it does not necessarily follow that experimentation under these receiverships is being carried on by methods found to be profitable and safe in scientific procedure. Some of the experiments in sociology and economics being carried out in Russia may be taken as being scientifically based and as being adequately carried on. Other projects may be briefly dismissed as being so fantastic as to require no serious consideration.

Many of the emergency measures in Italy

seem to work under the conditions of today; what they may be worth tomorrow is highly problematical. Whatever the plan of the emergency measures in Germany may be, and it does not seem quite sane, it is being put through in a destructive mood by mob madness.

Singularly enough it is here in our own country, in which millions of sentimentalists hold hands aloft over the calculated cruelties in Russia, and direful results of unenlightened action in Germany, that such a serious opposition to the "Brain Trust" is

manifested. Our national administration, recognizing that many necessary emergency measures were in the nature of experiments, has called into consultation persons who supposedly bring knowledge bearing upon the most promising procedure in the matter. In taking this action a closer adherence has been shown to the ways of science than has been done under any other receivership. It is to be remembered that much material may be lost, destroyed or rendered useless in any experiment, no matter how carefully it may be planned. Some features of the present

situation in America suggest a state of war. To recover from such a state will, of course, be accompanied by some blunders and consequent wastage of material. It can be confidently predicted, however, that the wreckage of life and human values will be minimized to a degree in conformity with the adequacy of the plans and the efficiency of their execution, as modified by the fortunes of war, exigencies of politics and the repercussions from other countries in receivership.

SKY PILOTS AND WASTRELS

BY WINTHROP RUTLEGE

THE "Little Minister" (Golden Gate) is one of those phenomena for which the filmgoer may praise or blame, as he sees fit, the recent wave of film censorship. For there is much reason to believe that had not the church folk decided to clean up the films and had not "Little Women" proved that the innocuous can be made attractive if the sentimentality is laid on with sufficient thickness, Mr. Barrie's whimsy about a little town in Scotland might never have found its way into celluloid.

But the censors did rail against the more frank treatment of sex and the Pollyanna type of film was found to be a money-maker. And so we have "The Little Minister" bringing happy tears from the lady patrons and Katharine Hepburn being irresistibly lovely in a gypsy gown and a Scottish burr.

Miss Hepburn is naturally, I think, destined to be a great film actress rather than a great stage player. It is the swift subtleties of her facial expression which equip her peculiarly to act for the camera, which can record them all. In a recent flyer at the Broadway stage she found that these things did not reach her audiences, who complained, rather, about her bodily immobility—a thing very necessary in the more intimate departments of screen acting.

Not that she suffers from immobility in "The Little Minister", in which she lopes gaily over the entire Scotch countryside. But the fact is that when portraying emotions in intimate scenes she does it all with facial eloquence. Furthermore she does it so effectively that it would be a definite loss were the stage to take her away from the films.

The Barrie film has been deftly made and picturesquely photographed. John Beal gives the young clergyman a dogged earnestness and the supporting cast is full of able thespians who blend well into the pastoral background. Miss Hepburn appears as the mys-

terious gypsy girl who incites the villagers to fight when the troops come in to arrest the leaders in a recent mill-hands' riot. She laughs down the pacifist preacher and leads his flock away from him into the fray. Thereafter Mr. Barrie forgets his economic theme and settles down to relating his old wives' tale about the romance of the preacher and the gypsy—who really wasn't a gypsy at all, but a fine lady fleeing from the boredom of a ducal castle.

The only significance of the film is as a vehicle for Miss Hepburn's amazingly effective screen acting. Otherwise it is merely a suavely executed exhibit of mummery—meaning exactly nothing.

* *

"Forsaking All Others" (Warfield) is a gay and swift-moving adaptation of the recent Broadway play of the same title. It exhibits Joan Crawford (with benefit of much retrenchment in the field of make-up) as a debutante of the heigh-ho-lack-a-day school about to become the bride of Robert Montgomery, a thoroughly irresponsible, wealthy and champagne-sopping youth of the same breed.

Enter Clark Gable, like a character out of a mixture of Hemingway and Michael Arlen; he has come back from Spain with the intention of marrying Miss Crawford. When he finds she is promised to his old friend, he decides to be the best man at the wedding and thereafter to get himself magnificently drunk. Montgomery, however, gets drunk before the wedding, and in a slight muddle, marries the wrong girl, a lady with whom he had been slightly more than merely friendly during a gay half-year abroad.

Thus Miss Crawford is left at the church with Gable for consolation. The story moves on through Montgomery's divorce and plans for a second attempt to stage the wedding. And by this time, of course, you know she

will never wed Mr. Montgomery, but will eventually sail for some far port with Mr. Gable.

The main amusement of the film is the antics indulged in by the trio of chief characters, aided by laconic Charles Butterworth. Some of these are highly amusing; others—such as the spanking Gable gives his heroine with a silver brush—are a trifle boring. There is a little too conscious an effort to match the gaiety achieved in such films as "It Happened One Night" and "The Thin Man", and, alas, the effort frequently proves as vain as it is transparent. But perhaps the capers of these idle rich give a sense of vicarious luxury to the woe-begone depression victims to whom the purchase of a seat at the movies these days is a matter of prodigal extravagance.

* *

"Beyond Bengal" (Columbia) is a wild animal picture without benefit of either the thrills or neatness of production of the Frank Buck opuses. Audiences who do not mind seeing pythons and tigers pitted in staged death battles feel a sense of revulsion at seeing tiny apes and honey bears fed to constrictors and crocodiles merely to provide camera fodder. The whole thing bears the earmarks of a crassly commercial piece of hokum, and moreover it is not as exciting as many others that have preceded it.



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THREE DRAWINGS FOR A PORTRAIT

BY WILLIAM JUSTEMA

1931

HE is always late. The impression is that he was born late; lost precious time at birth and has never quite caught up. A telephone will awaken him or he himself will wake very regularly at eight o'clock in the morning. The day may have many or few appointments: it will, regardless, end far behind schedule. Although luncheon may be only an hour delayed, dinner will certainly eat away all except the final minutes from theater or concert. This because he went to two widely separated places for tea, and finally arriving home, for the second time during the day bathed and shaved while cocktails waited. Midnight finds him keeping, besides its own, an afternoon's engagement. Then suddenly he goes somewhere remotely out of town to have Tuesday's breakfast on Wednesday.

He knows everybody. His home is, as a result, a combination post-office, telephone-exchange, hotel, and florist-shop. Bells never cease ringing nor buds opening: a blossom to each jangle. The house, which is large, could easily be papered throughout with a year's telegrams. While this seems not to have occurred to him, what he has done is bury his bedroom underneath photographs of friends. Perhaps he dreads being alone. These friends are almost anyone who is good-looking, celebrated, individual, sweet, or outcast. Contacts are in a large part his career; new personalities and viewpoints he woos like a lover. The goal is seldom sexual, yet the outline is the same: curiosity is followed by pursuit, disinterest follows on satisfaction. In this he is only human. But he is politely with infinite patience continuing relationships which bore him: in this he is divine. He it must be, however, who pursues: pursued, he grows suspicious. In this he is masculine. If one would intrigue him, the technique is to appear indifferent, a trifle condescending. In this respect he is feminine. With all his meeting and entertaining, being met and entertained, it is only at intervals that society, as such, arouses him. Social conquests he seems to make merely to remind himself that he can. In this he is like a child.

He has money. Furthermore, he comes of a wealthy family and never has worked for a living. It is simply impossible to conceive of him doing so. Nor am I concerned with what he would be if he were different. That he differs from his class is sufficient. Most rich people assume possession of things which cannot normally be bought, whereas he takes nothing but money for granted. Realizing that if he wants anything he can

buy it or something very like it, he thrashes around in search of ambitions money cannot realize. Persons who have to labor, labor much less hard. For he must create his own jobs as well as work at them. He invariably takes the path of most resistance and puts obstacles in it. Were his tasks as he planned them, good. Instead, the obstacles proceed of themselves to multiply until, worn out, he purchases their removal. Immediately, of course he manufactures himself a new set destined like the others to test money's limitations and his own. There are, in fact, few values he does not examine as he examines his teeth and his hair. Almost as though he felt personal cleanliness to be the one certainty, his fastidiousness is excruciating, desperate. He who can afford any standard has a standard anyone can afford. What few illusions he insists on keeping are paid for in discarded linen.

He seems sad. This is due, partly to his heavily shaded eyes, partly to his low voice and slow way of speaking. While he talks he periodically dies and only after a decent interval resumes the conversation. Egoists are oftentimes insulted; they need not to be. He is always as preoccupied. This is the abstractness that passes for sadness, a sadness which is generally considered to be deliberate. He has been called an emotional masochist. I think it not so much that he enjoys sorrow as that sorrow enjoys him, has made him its home. Quite naturally people believe that because he is willing to listen to their troubles that he gets pleasure from doing so. The pleasure he receives would be an aesthetic one. As others use colors or numbers he uses human woe. He is an important mourner at the universal funeral. There is excellent precedent in his medium of tears; nothing specially contemptible about suffering. Anyway the vicarious aspect, open to criticism, is soon lost. A craftsman, something too expert about his sympathy may lead its recipients to imagine that weeping is its own reward. No one knows exactly what he expected. Whether or not he anticipated their ingratitude and his own disappointment isn't easy to say. I would describe him as a fatalist never completely resigned to fate.

He was born a Catholic. And he will be buried a Catholic. Meanwhile the one religion hangs like a vapor of voices around him. The choir is his conscience. Opposed to it is an intellectual consciousness he makes no attempt to curb. Neither does he try to merge heresy with orthodoxy but allows them alternately to take possession of him. Between these extremes lies his life, a life

full of extremes. His motives, in the manner of motives are unlike their result. Particularly he has a way of turning a mean impulse to pious account, never forgetting the unworthy origin, even wistful in regard to it. For goodness has become a habit with him. Also he has a reputation for being good. Finally, no one would believe it if he were not. Herein, his martyrdom. The only surcease is in the hands of palmists. Of fortune-tellers he asks the end of more responsibility than he can bear. Votive lights burn throughout his residence while in another part of the city he plots against his conscience. He penetrates crystals; he flirts with damnation wielding a fan of tarot cards. But the free will controversy was settled for him at birth. Technicalities may engage his mature attention; his rosary by now can tell itself. Should he seek to escape, try to jump; it would catch and hold him back.

To repeat and connect:—

I was conscious, first, of his lateness. One is. Thereafter it is the thing about him one notices most often. You can count on it as you never can count on clocks; the watch isn't made that wouldn't make him late. A calendar, worn at the wrist, would serve him approximately as any Swiss timepiece. The machine hasn't been made which will get him to his destination before he starts. You see him pass you all hours of the day dizzily hanging onto a strap, his driver dividing the traffic as with a knife. You picture him all hours of the night at the wheel himself speeding and dozing. He rests best when in rapid motion; relieved, no doubt, at the thought of overtaking some task he has invented. Fortunately the car never entirely goes off the road into the ditch. He never absolutely sleeps: he is much too tired for that, much too busy. Throughout his dreams he runs up endless flights of stairs three steps at a time. He is at his friends' service and has all but worn himself out in it.

I next became aware of the vastness of his acquaintance; a circle without a language in common, with a single common understanding. With the rest I sanctioned his inability to be prompt by being prompt myself. Friends wait for him if just to hear him say "So sorry . . ." In order to do this he enters swiftly, and from holding his breath in running, lightly. The occasions on which he has been 'so sorry' would be greater than the words in all Shakespeare. You are starting to wonder how anyone can continue to be so sorry when you feel his soft hand and look into his mild eyes. Then you wish that he had been later so that you could have

waited longer. To wait for him is all he asks of his friends. There is not much else they could do. Or would be allowed to do. Proudly independent, his entrances alone require collaboration. Wait for him you can. By waiting, you can see him arrive at the last. His subsequent apology is, in effect, an apology for having money.

I appreciated that his wealth afforded him privileges including tardiness, but I could not at once understand why he should feel badly about anything so habitual. He could afford to be late, indeed made no attempt not to be; and yet that was not the end of it! Explicitly: it was the beginning of his excellent manners. Along with him arrives the most superb background of its kind. Riches and breeding have fostered it and he encircles his circle of friends always with an appropriate panorama. So considerate is his glamour, so considerate he, that those who have come to beg desire nothing but an opportunity to give. Consequently his house and mind both are over-furnished. Black-armor and crucifix; St Theresa and Krafft-Ebbing; the juxtapositions are beyond belief. Obviously it all adds to the fascination. No one except a bore ever is bored and there are plenty of bibelots and cigarettes for the nervous. The conversation is geographical; the food educated. There is music. He himself sings very beautifully. He likes to sing; likes fine viands; thrills to ideas. Still, with a perfect accompanist, a good cellar, and abundant intelligent companionship; you wonder, sneaking a look at him, was anyone, ever, so troubled?

I cannot, as yet, explain all his melancholy. His delinquency has been spoken of enough; he is late when he comes, but he is sorry. Assured there is no cause for sorrow—hasn't he, ultimately, landed?—he remains, among adorers, unhappy. Like a bright bird trapped. At risk of being fatuous one pities him. It is really regrettable that his plumage is so splendid. Without money he might possibly be made to feel as free as, for example, he makes those to whom he gives money. Or, a dependant of himself, he might do himself justice. Most typically, too, for humane matters interest him most. His distress as he paces his bedroom the hour a man is being executed is approached only by that of the condemned. The latter would marvel at his anguish, would feel cheated of his own agony. Which, in a way, is so brief; that of our subject so infinite. Any barbarism ignites him like a rocket. He rises, he showers gold, he falls in darkness to the Bay. Spent, with a momentary sense of futility, he floats along and there is music—Palestrina's.

I can see that the church has provided an ethical framework for his life. And that social training has made of the doors and windows attractive ways in and out. All decorations, though, together with some of the barriers or walls, are personal. His ex-

istence abounds in gestures too extravagant for religion, too unpretentious for society. He loves nothing better than to throw cake on the waters and not tell anybody about it. At these times he comes near to being gay. Secretly of course. He might be misunderstood if he laughed aloud when he is writing out cheques. Does he owe some immemorial debt that he will pay others for doing what is their duty, whose dispatch is ample recompense? His great generosity he calls mere selfishness. Is this an alibi in reserve against diminishing of interest? According to him, philanthropy is self-indulgence, a luxury he permits himself. Surely it is wise to call it that. Is it, as well, cruel? Then it is cruel to be modest. But he is not modest to be cruel. Over and above what he says is what he does. And what he does is done with a swift silence and humility which humbles the greatest. Thus do the meek inherit the earth.

People are constantly pointing him out; a tall slight dark figure, elegant save that his head won't adapt to hats. In the city where he lives he is, at forty, legendary. People are continually talking about him. The fog alone keeps his ears from bursting into flame. For instance, people say that he arrived at a musicale forty-eight hours after its conclusion; that he prefers the company of Negroes to that of his own race; that he is ten times a millionaire; that he contemplates suicide; that he "hides" in good works. People ask, "Aren't those ex-convicts with him in his box?" "Have you heard that he has an illegitimate child in France?" "Where can those tuberose be?" So speculation augments fact. Not even he can separate them: blackmail from charity; the emeralds he has from the emeralds he has not. These are minor details to a sphinx remembering its secret, or trying to fathom it. I merely marvel and I wonder. My actual knowledge is limited to a few observations. I happen to know that the tuberose are in the perfume Byzance. Also that whenever I have a little too much to drink I invariably want to die for him although how he could benefit from my death I can't imagine.

1932

MUCH can happen in a year and nothing be especially apparent. He is still late; sociable without being social; fairly wealthy; given to melancholy; a Catholic. Probably the most noticeable change is his singing of which he is doing a lot before larger and larger audiences. These do not always gather exclusively to hear him sing and because he knows this he often by his singing makes them weep. The fact that he is, for the first time, being vindictive, deserves detailed explanation.

Those who said that he was waiting for his uncle to die have proved themselves to have been the restless ones. How can it be

said that he was "waiting" who never ceases to complain when people come, or events happen, on time? The calendar records the passing of a year—the hands of his timepieces are where they were a year ago. Why they remain thus is now well known: they are saving for the sudden demands his nerves or his heart makes. Then, when there is not time, in no time at all he works the miracles for which he is famous; anything from catching an Express Limited to averting a suicide. This is an endless business; it is of the nature of trains to move and of suicide to die; either may be prevented but again and again. Anyone who has underwritten a human life knows what I mean. Trains also are impatient, implacable; a nephew's work is never done. It is never done and Death has such kind eyes, comes of a nice family, too, lovely people to marry into. That is, if his secretary or his secretary's secretary could find an open hour, a twenty-fifth one. Meanwhile the doorbell is ringing. From his deep bi-diurnal bath, with just a suggestion of the languorous martyr he wonders sighing "Why must people be so prompt?"

All that I am writing is in answer to that question. Merely say to him, "So that you can be late", would not suffice. There are friends and loves, acquaintances and admirers to be considered and comprehended—I was about to say "apprehended". They have their reasons.

More recently there are debtors and creditors. They are theirs. The number of persons directly or indirectly kept going during the depression following the crash of the stock market is quite incredible when his wealth is compared with that of a really rich man. This, however, is a comparison which interests few of his dependants—debtors or creditors, what do such distinctions, and which he always waives, matter now that all commodities have disappeared leaving only luxuries—and people whom one knows?

These people he wilfully and inadvertently knows are variously cause for happiness and, I imagine, for regret. I have to imagine the latter: his gracefulness would not admit it. But the happiness comes first; the sincerest form of flattery. He is amused when imitators, who may or may not have manicures, regularly burn sticks of incense in their bathrooms; pleased when non-Catholics attend mass. Green is his favorite colour, green is favored in his friends' wardrobes also. They prefer old music just as he does. And where they live you may find a similar mingling of odors floral and canine because in his great house there happens to be for every bottle of costly imported perfume a pedigreed dog who needs the same. A new blend, you will grant me, and difficult to balance; himself alone manages such to perfection: to many others his contagious taste is a desired and dread infection not easily

—Continued on page twenty-one

NORA CONKLIN, "ALIEN AGITATOR"

AN INTERVIEW BY CAROL DANE

(Editor's note: Nora Conklin is one of the defendants in the Criminal Syndicalism trial in Sacramento.)

OUR interview began in a jocular manner when I asked Nora to tell me something about her background.

"Well, on or about the blankety blank day of 1776, a group of men met, planned, conspired and agreed to overthrow the government (the English monarchy that owned and governed the colonies at that time).

"Do you think they called it 'Criminal Syndicalism' in those days?" she laughingly asked.

I couldn't answer Nora's question, but guessed they called them "disloyal subjects" and "rebels", and that English newspapers were probably calling them worse things. Out of our bantering, however, developed some interesting facts.

Among these men that day was one, Matthew Thornton, and as a result of their conspiracy they agreed to issue the Declaration of Independence—"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it . . ."

Matthew Thornton affixed his signature to this document which was to be so thoroughly scrapped by 1934 as to make possible the arrest and jailing of his many-greats granddaughter, Nora Conklin.

To describe Nora—she is best described by the proverbial type associated with a name like hers. She's about 40 now, and when she wrinkles her pug nose at anything—then you know it's doomed!

Nora's grandfather was born in Michigan. He was a farmer and a carpenter. "They all had trades in those days, the farmers," she explained.

Her grandfather on her mother's side was a professional soldier and her mother was born in the barracks at Glasgow, Scotland. Her father was born in Michigan, too, where a street is called by the family name, "Thornton Avenue", and the little town of Thornton, Mich., also carried the family name.

Nora and Fred Conklin have been married twenty years. Nora herself was born and raised on her grandfather's farm and went to school in the traditional "little red schoolhouse" built on land donated to the

community by her grandfather. She loves reminiscing about those days.

"All we had were kids' books and the Almanac, but Fred's father had Karl Marx in his library. My father was a Democrat because his father was one. Fred's father was a Republican because Iowa was a Republican state and he was a Civil War veteran. He was another farmer and a saddle-maker. Fred says he can remember great stacks of buffalo robes his father would buy from the Indians. One of my father's odd jobs was policeman at the polls at Rainey Corner on election days to keep the drunks away. Say! He'd strut around there drunk as a lord, himself. They all did. Who passed out the booze, I don't know, but it was as good a way to catch votes then as it is now."

Nora completed her elementary schooling at the age of 17, then went to a business college and took a university extension course at the same time. She worked in a library for two years, clerked for a year, and in 1914 she and Fred married. A few years later Fred was drafted for the World War but a ruptured appendix prevented his seeing active service. Then it was that Nora returned to business for a course in telegraphy. She worked for a while at this trade, but was fired along with many thousands of women to make job room for the boys returning from the war.

"All this time we were farming," Nora said. "There was a ready market for crops, and good prices. With our Irish bump of cautiousness we saved enough to pay off our debts and buy some new machinery. But a good many of our farmer neighbors expanded more than we did and on the hopes raised by this false 'war-time prosperity', went into debts which many were never able to pay off except by eventually losing their life-work to mortgage eaters."

"Around 1921 prices began to go down so bad and there didn't seem to be any prospect of them getting better, we sold our farm and started west—to grow up with the country."

"We brought several thousand dollars with us and sunk it in the Holland Land Co. The Bank of America (then the Bank of Italy) had the first mortgage, we had the second. When the company went broke, the bank got it all. We packed up and moved to Sacramento."

"Here I worked at Hale's Department Store for almost three years and at several other places. It wasn't quite so hard to get jobs then. All this time Fred was doing electrical work. He's a skilled electrical engineer and was president of the Electricians' Union in Shelby, Montana. He had a trav-

eler's card, but had to pay \$100 difference in initiation fee when we came to Sacramento, and he couldn't do that. But let me tell you one thing, he never did scab jobs."

Nora was approaching the more immediate period in her life which was far less placid than her reminiscences.

"You know, Nora," I said, "According to propaganda all Communists are just a bunch of malcontents who wouldn't work if they had jobs, but you and Fred and your families seem to have been pretty useful human beings to society."

Nora's eyes flamed—her nose wrinkled. Then her eyes twinkled, she tapped one foot on the floor, her fingers on the table.

"By the way," she said with a grin. "Roscoe Conklin, Republican candidate for President, was Fred's great uncle; another uncle built the beautiful staircase in the Capitol in Madison, Wisconsin."

"When did you suspect that things as they are might not be the best possible arrangement?" I asked her.

"Well, in the winter of 1931." Her lips tightened and she spoke with bitterness. "I saw with my own eyes two kids looking for food in a garbage can. I was reading 'capitalist' papers then, and listening to Will Rogers trying to raise funds for the drought-stricken farmers of Arkansas over the radio, and to J. P. Morgan and Gifford pleading, 'You contribute your dime and I'll contribute mine', so I thought there were a lot of dimes for relief. We contributed. In fact, my husband had to, to keep his job. Shortly after the children incident, I witnessed old people eating from refuse. That was too much! If there was money for relief, I didn't see where those needy were getting it! So, when a young man handed me a leaflet asking everyone to go to Plaza Park to help the Unemployed Council get relief for a woman and her nine children, I went."

"Everybody was invited to a meeting the following night, so I went there, too. We were asked to circulate petitions for federal relief. I found out how people in my neighborhood were living—poverty stricken! In one week I collected 250 signatures. The only one who refused to sign was a disabled war veteran—because he was afraid that his name would get back to Washington and he'd lose his pension."

"Then I began to work more and more for the unemployed council. I found that the more work we did, the more there was to do. The greater the need, the less the government was willing to do."

"In my final experience with Mary Judge, the relief head here in Sacramento, Mary spoke a little roughly to me. I an-

swered. Then she said that if I didn't shut my mouth she'd 'put me where I belonged'. Before this happened I didn't quite believe all the things I'd heard said about that office. I was a bit shocked and plenty angry.

"It didn't take me long to see that Mary Judge had a well-paid job not to superintend relief to needy, but to see how many she could keep off relief. The injustices in the relief distribution are just too many to tell you all about now."

"How were you and Fred getting along all this time?" I asked.

"For a time there our rugged individualism carried us along on a steadily diminishing income of our own, and Yankee gall enabled us to bluff the corner grocer like so many others. But we were beginning to realize that it wasn't fair to make the little fellow carry the burden of feeding us. Fred and I were doing all kinds of odd jobs, certainly incompatible with our earning ability, until we couldn't get that kind of job."

"Finally our physical condition convinced us that we couldn't possibly live on \$14, growing steadily less, a month. I applied for relief which they told me I could get depending on how long I had lived here. I told them I'd lived here long enough to vote in three presidential elections—and for Neil McAllister for district attorney!"

* * * * *

On the way to the police station, after a recent demonstration, Nora's arresting officer said: "You told plenty, didn't you?"

"Not half of what I know," answered Nora.

"You know too damned much and you've got to keep your mouth shut about some of the things in this country," threatened the officer.

"One last question about yourself, Nora—the usual one. How did you become a Communist?"

"At one meeting I attended we were asked to take around petitions to put the party on the ballot. I didn't know what the Communist Party was, but I thought every party ought to have the right to be on the ballot. So I took one of the petitions. In order to get signatures, I had to be able to tell people about the party, so I started some investigation. Then I put in my application."

"On the relief question, what's the situation in our country now, Nora?"

"About April 19 of last year the press published Mary Judge's relief report showing that less than \$5 per month per person was distributed. Around that time Francis Bagley, FERA field representative, said: 'This figure is ridiculous, and if true, means that the unemployed of Sacramento County are being forced into slow starvation. The relief situation in this county is the worst in the state, with the exception of Imperial County, which has always been rotten'—that's what Mr Bagley thinks about it."

"My own experience has proved to me that they are trying to feed as few as possible with as little as possible, with the intention of discouraging applicants."

"They call you a foreign agitator when you say that," I suggested.

"Say, I'll tell you one thing," Nora's nose wrinkled. "I'm a foreigner in a foreign country, and the conditions in this country and the things the government gets away with are foreign to what I was taught to believe. And the promises of the government are utterly foreign to what it does."

"Why, do you know that prior to the first national hunger march in 1931 unemployment relief in this country was a hit-and-miss proposition—it hit one and missed a dozen. The continuous activities and increasing organization of the unemployed has been the main factor instrumental in compelling government administrations to set up relief boards of some sort."

"The federal and state administrations admit that the present system of relief is inadequate. They admit that unemployment is a permanent problem. They recommend setting up boards to deal with it on a permanent basis. Yet they persistently refuse to consider any plan to insure a minimum amount of economic security for the unem-

ployed workers and poor farmers.

"Many schemes have been offered—but upon close examination reveal that they would throw the bulk of the burden of relief upon the worker. The one plan that meets the need is the Turdeen Bill, H. R. 7598, sponsored by the Unemployed Council and endorsed by more than 2000 A. F. of L. locals, many trades and labor councils, 35 or more city and county administrations, numerous fraternal and other groups, and at least one American Legion post. This bill has been persistently side-tracked because it would place the burden of relief on those directly responsible for the crisis in this country—the profit-takers!"

"There seems little wonder that they wanted to 'put you away' for a while, does there?" I asked.

"Do you want to know why I'm in jail," she returned. "Because these profit-takers know that I'm one Irishman determined to follow in the footsteps of my grandfather, Matthew Thornton, yes, the one who signed the Declaration of Independence and rid this country of starvation—an evil foreign to the well-being of the working class."

"I'm a little late in the Mendelian cycle, but there's two foreign agitators in my family—my grandpap, Matt, and me."

DEMAGOGUE

*Remember how we kids used to make paper bags!
Seized them by the neck and squeezed them up
Within the fist and thrust one finger down
The crinkled babbiting; much like a throat,
And blew and hissed till dizzy with compression,
Then burst the paper bomb with crashing thrill
On head or butt or bum or what you will?*

*The privileged, the merciful and the great,
The good and rich have got him by the neck
And down his babbiting have blown so much
Hot air and trickery and paradox,
Then squeezed him up; so that distended wide,
With frightful indigestion he's immense
And bouyant, with this inconsistent lift
Of platitudinous, turgid flatulence.
He's reeling, an unballasted balloon.
They bought him with a very generous purse
But must find means to dis-inflate him soon.
They're wondering where to crack him down, or worse;
Upon whose bum shall ignominy burst?*

—ERIC O'DONOVAN

THREE DRAWINGS FOR A PORTRAIT

—Continued from page eight

got rid of. His notions inhabit one like opium. Thus, without intending to do it he makes sycophants who do not realize they are sycophants until they discover their fellows in a familiar adopted attitude. An aversion to flying or addiction to Southern cooking can reveal the segments of his circle to each other. Then a pause for thought ensues: not a long one. His coterie is full of object-lessons which he charmingly prevents its members from learning. To learn might be to leave. Well, and what is geography?—one is even more devoted at a distance. None of his hundred-odd most intimate friends need have courage: the appearance of independence is enough. Everybody knows better. So everybody who knows that source of financial and emotional bounty dispenses it in the style to which he is accustomed. Nothing is too good for the friends of the friends of his friends.

As a friend he is baffling. He allows the greatest latitude and gives the minimum amount of attention. Lying in hiding to pounce on him between his Italian and German lessons one goes over all one has to say to him, later continuing in sleep any conversation one has had. Consequently one is never quite sure what one has or has not said, and worries . . . Here is the ideal father-confessor and here I have forgotten what I had to confess! Eventually, of course, I will remember, and write it. Since, of course, one must tell him everything. This means he brings to the role of confessor knowledge he could not get from the Church alone. It means as well that he need not leave the Church in order to satisfy his curiosity any more than a priest would, should he have curiosity. You will agree that the position is strategic, magic. He receives the kudos of a movie star and yet his only performances have been concerts of song.

I have a theory to explain more than mere practice the increasing beauty of his singing. His music, now that he has been made richer and more exasperated, improves daily and with every—tenth—preposterous demand for a contribution to found this or support that. It would seem as though he already had enough, too many, interests—nearly everyone who knows of him has other marvelous ideas of how to spend his income and hardly anyone misses an opportunity for telling him. Yet presumption alone does not make him mad. Acceptable or not, his position is well stated; nothing infuriates him like imbecility; never so articulate as when furious, the privileged few who have seen his anger have a glimmer of what divine wrath must be like: compassion become intolerable, wreaking vengeance on itself. A

dreadful happening but one which has, evidently, a tonic effect on the singing voice.

1933

THIS is the way I see it. I will be waiting, not for the first time, for my patron. And he will be late. And he will be the rest of it. It will be Christmas Day which is also his birthday (—how much this seems to explain!) I will be in the music-room almost at the top of his house watching the white fog drive past the large windows in, in from the sea. Except for the crackling logs there will, really, be no sound. But, seeming to hear him sing; seeming to see him at the small forty-seven keys piano by his bed in his bedroom with the right knee on the piano-bench and the right hand running over even before he comes up stairs (although I have been waiting two hours) some song just acquired: I will—without actually glancing into the mirror or reaching for the proper book—somehow prepare my face and mind to greet, or rather, to be greeted by—him who is presently coming.

He will not come that soon. As I might have known, seeing when I arrived the gifts piled high in his room and overflowing into many other rooms. These gifts of potted hyacinths, of poinsettias, and the great white packages, and the little bright packages, will further retard him. He may, I know, not open any of the presents for days, or even read the cards—but he will put a long hand with fingers curved to his mouth and stand quiet and dark-looking in the center of the room regarding them and drawing from them the inspiration for more purchases and more cablegrams of his own sending. And while I listen to the far murmur of his telephoning—like a river deep and sweet and inexhaustible—I will realize anew that we, his friends, live each of us at the end of a labyrinth composed of all his other friends. (Let us follow out this metaphor.)

We are, then, monsters waiting to devour what we can of the heart and brain of this personable Theseus of Irish extraction. That it is ourselves, not him, who will be overpowered, we knowing the (Grecian) legend, know beforehand. And who is being masochistic now?

It all depends, I suppose, on the point of view. Although it is impossible to think of this man as "bull-like"—it is easy enough, for our purpose, to think of him (secretive, secreted, a secret) as the Minotaur. I know of some who so think of him; who blame their special kind of death to having been close to him! (And with all that fatuously implies of intimacy.) But in thinking of this man with the heart-shaped face as a human minotaur—eclectic unto rapaciousness, and thereafter rather distant as a gentleman must be from a dead thing—think of the eagerness with which you approached the labyrinth. You knew who lived in that house else

you would not have gone there full of curiosity and hoping to make an impression. No, I think it must be we who are the beasts and he the prey: as all men with the reputation for charm and generosity must be the prey of those with the reputation or opportunity for less. And of course it is in a death-struggle because all social intercourse is that—with failure to interest: the death-dealing blow.

I do not mean that the struggle is always obvious. One seldom prepares what one is going to say or do in order to get attention. One may even deliberately think of nothing in order, shall I say? to be one's "own" self. Yet even with the most unnaturally unprepared I feel that there is always the hope with this man more than with the other men one meets: That he will find something in or of your own, a quality or an idea—to seize on. It will seem to you so extremely important that you register on his consciousness that you will go to almost any length to do so. For example, you might plan to have him discover you weeping as young girls plan to have their fiancés surprise them while they are playing a musical instrument. (Except that your tears would be dried up by the time he arrived.) Or you might send him six dozen Madame Pirnay roses. (If you were sure the house was not already full of them.) Or you might after considerable manoeuvring arrange to tell him tête-à-tête late some evening how gifted you had always thought him and incidentally how talented you were, too—if only by virtue of recognition. (At which large moment in your life he would be quite likely to go to sleep!) To your immense confusion you would see his head sink lower and lower on his chest: your monologue, his lullaby. . . . And thus would Theseus slip away from you—triumphant in sleep, accomplishing one more victory without violence. While, if you knew, in other parts of the labyrinth you might see and hear all of the many Minotaurs who were there before you—stamping, now, and snorting. They know about the thread. The thread?

When Theseus had slain the Minotaur he escaped from the labyrinth by following a thread he had cautiously left behind him. Otherwise he would never have been able to extricate himself. Headstrong and unthinking (i. e. "heroic") as he was—he trailed a thread of gold; money lined his path. . . . Well, those days are gone. In his present reduced financial situation he can leave of golden threads only the thinnest, liable to break when needed most.

The thought makes him commonly happy. I do not mean the hectic happiness said to be common among people who have always been rich and who, now that they are not—continue to behave as though they were because they "might as well, it couldn't possibly be worse." Nor do I mean the rather nervous happiness the once-rich of another

sort are said to be finding in their new simplicity. My friend is living neither lavishly nor yet simply. (For instance there is still champagne at dinner parties, but there are fewer dinner parties.) No, his happiness is what must be the happiness of a prophet who lives to find his prophecies fulfilled. Not that by writing or by word of mouth he predicted the crash that occurred. But certainly it bears out his whole *temperament* to perfection. The speculation (which in him takes the form of probing into the nature of things). The collapse (inevitable, of all except the very nature of things themselves). The aftermath (in effect: "my nature told me so"). That is, when he says "Life is a trap—" he knows, I believe, pretty much how the trap works. How else explain a certain melancholy pleasure he finds in it? The Law of retribution is his especial toy; the random workings, too, bring him a kind of satisfaction however sad. And now that, this year even more than last, there is no money with which to modify the machinery: the values, the ways of existence must be revealed to him—implacable as he has always felt they were. By his keen sense of hopelessness he might have invented irony. If "the revolution" he sometimes thinks imminent does not occur, he will write out his last cheque (a cheque heaping coals of fire) with something like a sigh of relief. The more interesting pursuits of aristocracy are often impeded by money.

There will always be rank injustice to engage him. From what I know of the Church it is a clumsy body compared with his own which long ago left the narrow religious field for the wider fields of practical ethics. The decisions of this more-than-legal judge are now being accepted as were his philanthropies. An example: he condemns the cocktail-party on the moral grounds that it robs an evening of its finer music. But although he is guilty of expecting others to share all his enthusiasms (and this "thoughtlessness" may be his *fee*, pure and simple—) he, above everyone, could give the perfect tutorage for meeting the world. (And this despite and because of his own misadventures.)

With his glamour, his elegance, his wit, his tenderness; courage, diplomacy; yes, and his sorrows—all women must weep that he is not their lover. (Well, Rome?)

If ever I achieve a commendable signature it will be largely because this man was my friend during the years that the most experiences in kind and in number were presented to my consciousness. I shudder, now, at thought of what I with my particular set of tendencies and appetites might have become under the influence of someone less civilized. And I know what it is to wake up in a horrible sweat of fear from dreaming that I have said or done one of the few things—such as insulted a lady or kicked an animal—which would anger him (—drunken-

ness alone would not). At the same time, I admit that there is oftentimes in his presence a temptation to commit the unpardonable if only as a protest against the tyranny of the just. But even this he would understand. There is no escaping his forgiveness.

And so I know that he will forgive the indiscretions in these "drawings"—and understand that he set the precedent for their being drawn by his habit of continually giving credit to the persons responsible for his own education. (A certain woman he credits with having given him the direct habits of thought which offset his natural dialectic turnings. A certain man he credits with much of his vocabulary. Another man has offered him—as a peach on a platter—minute descriptions of physical sensations he otherwise would have missed; another woman has represented an inviolable way of living. His speech is full of credit lines and I, too, would like to give him something but—

To speak properly: there is, at present, nothing that one has that one can give him. He has or he is—everything. On the other hand it seems that one has to give—or to allow him everything. I mean that he demonstrates the paradox. He himself, as he would be the first to say, is nothing: so completely is he self-encompassed, so completely does he efface himself.

My meaning cannot be very clear here. But he is an empty cup constantly overflowing. This emptiness (overflowing as it does) is in no way alarming, is, indeed, the emptiness proper to a legend. I have said that he is already legendary. It is true. And he has the true majesty of heroes and their statues. I especially mention the latter because this man whom so many idols idolize—gives off the same personal-impersonal impression of beauty as comes from good statues. He could appropriately be, and would enjoy being a bronze. The first for the ringing hollowness; the second, out of admiration for the Negro people.

He adores Negroes. They quicken him: thoughtlessly doing many things he thinks he would like to do, thoughtfully. The race is his alter ego. Sometimes it puts him under grave suspicion. No matter. None, at least, while the repressed remain vital, warming him. His attraction is to the helpless, enigmatic, gay and cruel: his choosing—perfect. Luckily he will not live to see the Negro race grow up.

Death is a dream he dreams, a reward to be deserved after a life of duty. And although, in this sense, he already deserves to die, die he cannot yet. There is still so much to do.

All he has to do he will do. He, who can scarcely bring himself to write letters—will probably die writing letters. Scolding letters, graceful letters, letters with cheques enclosed. And on receipt of the last, those

who love him most will say: "this is not due me", and those who love him less will say: "this is due me". And both, because of the enrichment there is in loving, will be correct. How clearly he sees this, too. Reciprocity in love would be more than he could endure. Theseus would become Midas and everything too gold. And he would stand then, as sometimes he stands now, in a paralysis of amazement, grieved by the touch of his hands.

He has said of a friend—"you feel when she speaks that *before* she has spoken she has raised in her mind every possible objection to what she is saying". Could this be his ideal? Does he always try to think out the consequences of his actions? —But it is unlikely that anyone will ever know exactly to what white degree he is conscious or cares to be conscious.

That is the burden of the song. And I, turning to put another log on the fire—my friend having solved the servant problem by waiting on the servants—will be conscious of his light step on the stair and that it must, after all, still be afternoon because one of the dogs would precede him if it were evening, as, in the morning he is preceded down his halls by the powdery and pungent odors of his bath.

I prepare a smile; his is the sweetest you will ever see.

(hand outstretched) "Hello, Billy; how are you?"

(taking hand) "Fine. How are you, Mulhall—"

"Really very well. A bit tired."

SONNET TO GREEN EYES

You say your eyes are green, and so I know
Why jade is beautiful; why pounding seas;
Hiding in emerald depths their mysteries,
Draw strong men down. I know why grasses
grow
On wondrous hills; why martial vineyards
blow
In low-swept winds; in wanton ecstasies
Soft breezes kiss the shading hemlock trees,
And wild birds seek chance verdure in the
snow.

When slumbering Nature lifts her head
from sleep—
Fair Virgin of the Cloud to wed the Sun—
She garbs herself in green, the gorgeous deep
Green mantle of the Spring by Winter
spun.
And as the year finds strength with glad
surprise,
So I drink deep the vintage of your eyes.

—W. K. B.

BOOKS

OTHER WAY AROUND

BRIGHT IS THE MORNING, by Mona Williams. (Harrison Smith and Robert Haas) \$2.50.

The White Queen in "Alice Through the Looking Glass" wouldn't have been in the least disconcerted by the structural plan of "Bright Is the Morning". Alice might be a trifle confused by the strange notion of living backward, but the White Queen assured her kindly that although it made one a little giddy at first, there was the great advantage of having one's memory work both ways.

"I'm sure mine works only one way," Alice remarked, "I can't remember things before they happen."

"It's a poor memory that only works backward," was the Queen's withering retort.

Plenty of books have begun in the present, and then skipped back to whatever period it seemed desirable to the writer for starting the actual unfolding of events. The method is generally harmless enough—there is only the one jolt when you find your heroine suddenly become a little child and you have to adjust yourself to her leap into the past. After that it goes along like any proper out-of-the-looking-glass story.

Not so with "Bright Is the Morning"—you're walking backward the whole way—or rather, taking five-year backward jumps. Starting with 1934 you meet three gentlemen of middle age and follow them back through the period of their lives that covers thirty years time. You end where they started—in the 1904 graduating class at Princeton.

It sounds a bit dizzy, but it makes surprisingly good, entertaining reading. You'd think there wouldn't be very much suspense, since you know right away how the book ends. The author succeeds, however, in making you just as anxious to find out what happened before each period as you'd ordinarily be to discover what came next in the normal chronological order of events.

Of course, Miss Williams took care to give her three characters the sort of lives that would lend themselves to this method of telling. At each five-year period there were interesting, unusually exciting, episodes. These not only made good separate stories in themselves, but also showed their logical effect on the character development of the men. Chiefly perhaps the relation of and influence on them of various women.

I'll admit I wouldn't care to see all the writers adopting this particular method of building a novel—it can be amusing and in-

teresting to read once. After that there wouldn't be any novelty, and originality of the idea constitutes one of the charms of this book. (Here somebody, I suppose, will up and inform me scathingly that so-and-so did this same thing years ago. Well, it was new to me at any rate!) It can't be denied, however, that it sometimes is a trifle annoying, just as one has become absorbed in a thrilling chapter, to be jerked away from Fagan's affairs and abruptly transferred to the doings of Henderson or Holt. That change in itself wouldn't be so disastrous to those of us who grew up on Dickens, but to be at the same time obliged to adjust oneself to going back five years in time is apt to constitute quite an exercise in concentration.

It is a little sad and disillusioning to turn back the years in two of the characters' histories and find how different the boys starting out in life were from the men we have met in their prime in the first chapter. The influence of women and of the circumstances that surround the struggle for existence must naturally have their hardening—or softening—effects but in the ordinary run of human beings the change would hardly be as startlingly drastic as it is with these particular men. But then Miss Williams was not concerned with average people—she intended to make an arresting, unusual, dramatic story. To my mind she has done it.

—D. C.

"I LIKE THE WAY IT BEGINS"

(Books selected by Dorothea Castelhun)

FICTION

FIVE SILVER DAUGHTERS, by Louis Golding. (Farrar & Rinehart) \$2.50.

It was Saturday night. The anarchists were gathered in the Silver kitchen in Oleander Street. They often turned up on week-nights, too; but there was something more ceremonious about the proceedings on Saturday nights. That is to say, they all knocked at the front door once-twice, then once-twice again. Within doors things were pretty much the same. They all talked assassination and drank tea-with-lemon.

THE DARK ISLAND, by V. Sackville West. (Doubleday, Doran & Co.) \$2.50.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson took their children away every year to the same place for their summer holiday. That habit began the trouble which ended in two persons losing their lives and in one criminal receiving an expression of sympathy from the coroner instead of a sentence of death from the judge. The inability of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson to vary their settled routine of life might thus be held originally responsible for the complicated disasters entailed upon their nearest

kin, disasters of whose implications Mr. and Mrs. Wilson fortunately never became aware.

LUST FOR LIFE, by Irving Stone. (Longmans, Green & Co.) \$2.50.

"Monsieur Van Gogh! It's time to wake up!"

Vincent had been waiting for Ursula's voice even while he slept.

"I was awake, Mademoiselle Ursula," he called back.

"No, you weren't," the girl laughed, "but you are now." He heard her go down the stairs and into the kitchen.

Vincent put his hands under him, gave a shove, and sprang out of bed. His shoulders and chest were massive, his arms thick and powerful. He slipped into his clothes, poured some cold water out of the ewer, and stropped his razor.

SO RED THE ROSE, by Stark Young. (Charles Scribner's Sons.) \$2.50.

"Whereas, the Creator," Malcolm Bedford wrote, "has seen fit to remove from the earthly scene our beloved friend, Hugh McGehee, and whereas, Zachary Taylor, President of the United States, stated that Edward McGehee of Woodville, brother of the deceased, was the best man he ever knew, making him, furthermore, executor of his estate, it is the opinion here that the virtues of said Hugh McGehee were no less great."

The light autumn wind stirring in his direction carried the sheet of paper from the arm of Malcolm Bedford's chair, along with a moment's drift of oak leaves, to the porch floor. When he had drunk a little too much, he used to write obituaries of people.

MARY PETERS, by Mary Ellen Chase. (Macmillan Co.) \$2.50.

Mary Peters first saw Cadiz in 1880. She was nine years old then. She had awakened early to the swift knowledge that the ship was quiet, not plunging or rolling, not pitching or swooping, not whining or groaning in her bolts and beams or rattling her gear, not even perceptibly swinging to the tide, but instead, still, tranquil, idle. She had awakened also to the garrulous cry of gulls, to their dark shadows wheeling across the mist-dimmed glass of her port, closed only the night before because of bad weather. Slipping into her clothes and not stopping even to wash her face and hands in her tin basin, she had run quickly up on deck, where now she stood with her father and stared, round-eyed, at the dazzling whiteness of the city.

JAMES SHORE'S DAUGHTER, by Stephen Vincent Benet. (Doubleday, Doran & Co.) \$2.50.

My mother had a memory book for each of us, in those days, and they traveled with us over the face of the earth. There was the

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There have been so many demands for Jean Winthrop's article on the San Francisco EXAMINER'S contemptible treatment of REDFERN MASON, music critic, because of his membership in the American Newspaper Guild, that the issue of

PACIFIC WEEKLY

for December 28, 1934, has long since been exhausted. We will re-print the article, together with the letter of the editor, W. K. Bassett, to the members of the American Newspaper Guild, in PACIFIC WEEKLY next Friday, January 18.

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